

An Update from Michael Karlin  
President, Mythic Imagination Institute

This month, I had the unique opportunity to deliver my first high school commencement address. Having barely made it through high school myself, it was not something I ever expected to have the honor to do. I guess the fact that it wasn't my alma mater or even in the same state helped! I was asked to deliver this speech to the students of St. Johnsbury Academy in St. Johnsbury, Vermont by a friend and supporter of Mythic Imagination who is a member of their Board of Trustees. She felt our message that every life is a story, and a story can change the world, was a perfect message for young adults to hear, particularly when passing through this major threshold in their lives. While my initial thought when she asked me was, "Sure, this will be fun," when I actually began to think about what I wanted to say, the overwhelming responsibility and opportunity of it all began to weigh down on me. I was going to be given one chance to communicate with these 250 graduating seniors before they were going to head out into the world on their journey; a mere 20 minutes to try and convey the accumulated wisdom of Mythic Imagination. What would I say? How would I choose?

I did realize that these kids were going to be in celebration mode and wouldn't really want to hear some stranger telling them life lessons. But perhaps one or two would actually listen, and if they did, perhaps it would have an impact. If every life is a story, and a story can change the world, couldn't every opportunity to affect someone's life have tremendous ramifications; even more so with a young adult? While I typically "wing it" when I speak, the gravity of the situation compelled me to write down my speech ahead of time. Up until the minute I walked on stage, I kept questioning in my head whether I had selected the right bits of information to share with them; the right stories. I may never know, but I hope so. We've included the speech in this issue of Mythic Passages. Tell me what you think?

At Mythic Imagination Institute, reaching children and young adults is a critical part of our mission. To that end, we are currently working on several initiatives in this area, and one that we are very excited about is our partnership with Creating Pride. We are blessed to have a team of teachers who have been volunteering their valuable time to help us build programs for K-12 education. Soon, we will begin working together with Creating Pride to create workshops for teachers and other programs. In this month's issue of Mythic Passages, we are privileged to have an article from Anne Ostholthoff, the founder and president of Creating Pride that discusses the spirit and nature of our partnership with them.

It is hard to believe that Mythic Journeys 2006 is only one year away, and that it has been a full year since Mythic Journeys 2004. Planning for 2006 continues to move ahead with great passion and creativity. The list of presenters and performers is growing as the conference and performance festival is taking shape. Since our last issue, we are very excited to be able to announce that Chungliang al Huang has agreed to participate. He

was not able to attend last year due to scheduling conflicts, and as anyone that has experienced Chungliang knows, a conference is just not the same without his energy, humor, and deep spiritual roots. We are also very excited to announce that Robert Bly will be joining us again in 2006. Please visit our website often to see our growing interdisciplinary list of our presenters and performers.

Discounted early registration for Mythic Journeys will be on-line in early July. Please register early to receive the discounted rate and to help us prepare best for the conference.

Once again, our editor and dedicated volunteer staff have put together a tremendous newsletter for you. I hope you enjoy it. Please keep in touch,

Be well,

Michael Karlin